

A BROKEN AND HUMBLER HEART

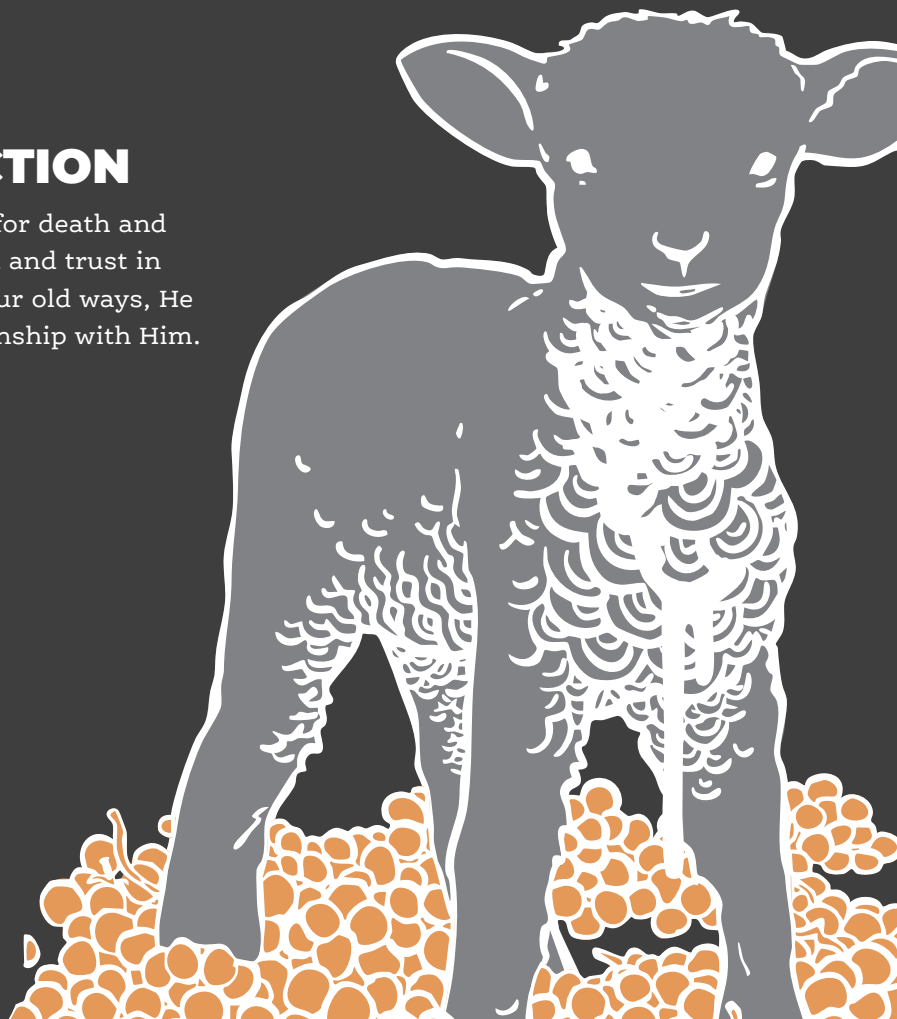
MAIN POINT.

Allowing sinful desires to take root leads to devastation.



CHRIST CONNECTION

Because of sin, we are destined for death and destruction. But when we repent and trust in Jesus to save us, turning from our old ways, He forgives and restores our relationship with Him.



DOWNFALL BEGINS IN THE HEART

This week, we're covering the passages and main points below. But we encourage you to read all of the content on the timeline as you prepare to teach.

2 Samuel 11—2 Samuel 12

WE'RE ALL CAPABLE OF SINNING

2 SAMUEL 11:2-5,14-17

2 One evening David got up from his bed and strolled around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing—a very beautiful woman. 3 So David sent someone to inquire about her, and he said, “Isn’t this Bathsheba, daughter of Eliam and wife of Uriah the Hethite?” 4 David sent messengers to get her, and when she came to him, he slept with her. Now she had just been purifying herself from her uncleanness. Afterward, she returned home. 5 The woman conceived and sent word to inform David, “I am pregnant.” . . . 14 The next morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. 15 In the letter he wrote: Put Uriah at the front of the fiercest fighting, then withdraw from him so that he is struck down and dies. 16 When Joab was besieging the city, he put Uriah in the place where he knew the best enemy soldiers were. 17 Then the men of the city came out and attacked Joab, and some of the men from David’s soldiers fell in battle; Uriah the Hethite also died.

REPENTANCE IS OUR ONLY RESPONSE TO SIN

2 SAMUEL 12:1-15

1 So the LORD sent Nathan to David. When he arrived, he said to him: There were two men in a certain city, one rich and the other poor. 2 The rich man had very large flocks and herds, 3 but the poor man had nothing except one small ewe lamb that he had bought. He raised her, and she grew up with him and with his children. From his meager food she would eat, from his cup she would drink, and in his arms she would sleep. She was like a daughter to him. 4 Now a traveler came to the rich man, but the rich man could not bring himself to take one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the poor man’s lamb and prepared it for his guest. 5 David was infuriated with the man and said to Nathan, “As the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die! 6 Because he has done this thing and shown no pity, he must pay four lambs for that lamb.” 7 Nathan replied to David, “You are the man! This is what the LORD God of Israel says: ‘I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you from Saul. 8 I gave your master’s house to you and your master’s wives into your arms, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah, and if that was not enough, I would have given you even more. 9 Why then have you despised the LORD’s command by doing what I consider evil? You struck down Uriah the Hethite with the sword and took his wife as your own wife—you murdered him with the Ammonite’s sword. 10 Now therefore, the sword will never leave your house because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hethite to be your own wife.’ 11 “This is what the LORD says, ‘I am going to bring disaster on you from your own family: I will take your wives and give them to another before your very eyes, and he will sleep with them in broad daylight. 12 You acted in secret, but I will do this before all Israel and in broad daylight.’” 13 David responded to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” Then Nathan replied to David, “And the LORD has taken away your sin; you will not die. 14 However, because you treated the LORD with such contempt in this matter, the son born to you will die.” 15 Then Nathan went home.

BEFORE YOU TEACH

MAIN POINT.

Allowing sinful desires to take root leads to devastation.

Leaders: Our propensity to sin runs deep, but God's mercy abounds. Allow the Holy Spirit to convict you of unconfessed sin this week, and follow David's example in confessing it to the Lord.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

WE'RE ALL CAPABLE OF SINNING

2 SAMUEL 11:3-4

"She was 'the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite' (11:3). This identification meant that both her father and her husband were members of an elite group of David's soldiers (23:34,39) and that her grandfather, Ahithophel (23:34), was David's most important adviser (16:23). So Bathsheba was a woman who moved in the highest circles of David's courtiers. But neither this knowledge of her identity, with all of its potential for imbroglia, nor David's own religious and moral beliefs proved strong enough to deter David from his desire to have a sexual liaison with her. The irrational power of David's lust overwhelmed all other considerations, and David took the fateful step of having Bathsheba brought to him at the royal palace. Suddenly, David began to function like the kings of 'all the other nations' who took from their people in order to satisfy their own desires (1 Sam. 8:11-20)."¹⁰

REPENTANCE IS OUR ONLY RESPONSE TO SIN

2 SAMUEL 12:13-14

"The metaphorical comparison between the lives of David and Israel, so firmly established prior to this point, is extended in this incident. Israel had played the harlot with foreign gods, thereby committing a sin for which the Torah decreed death (Deut. 7:25-26). Yet after judging them and causing them to sacrifice much of the blessing that had been theirs, Yahweh the Merciful permitted them to live."¹¹

2 SAMUEL 12:13-15

"This was the turning-point in the life of David, and the clearest indication that he was different from Saul in the most essential relationship of all, that of submission to the Lord God. For that reason he found forgiveness, whereas Saul never accepted his guilt or the rejection that followed from it. Psalm 32, traditionally accepted as expressing David's thoughts on this occasion, is exuberant over the joy of knowing forgiveness in place of guilt, restoration of fellowship after the pain of conviction of sin. In place of death he has new life, so freely does he enter into the grace of God."¹²

CONTEXT

Chapter 11 marks a major downfall in the “man after [God’s] own heart” (1 Sam. 13:14). How did David fall? We see evidence that David became apathetic in his purpose and in his devotion to the Lord. David had been very successful in battle. Most battles were fought in the spring because of horrible conditions in the winter, but in this chapter, David stayed home in Jerusalem. He simply wasn’t where he was supposed to be—in battle with his men. David had also previously taken many wives, which wasn’t in line with God’s will. These decisions along the way positioned David to make a grave mistake—one that would affect his life and the lives of others in ways he couldn’t have imagined. It’s important to note that although David sinned and “despised the LORD’s command” (2 Sam. 12:9), God kept the promise He made to never remove His faithful love from David (2 Sam. 7:15-16).

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

Repentance

Repentance is a response to God’s gracious call to salvation. It includes a genuine sorrow for one’s sin (Luke 5:1-11), a turning away from one’s sin toward Christ (Acts 26:15-20), and a life that reflects lasting change and transformation (Ps. 119:57-60). It is the human counterpart to God’s work of regeneration; in other words, the human side of our conversion.

LEADERS’ PRAYER

GOD, KEEP OUR HEARTS FROM BECOMING HARDENED TO THE HOLY SPIRIT’S CONVICTION WHEN WE SIN. HELP US TO RESPOND TO HIS LEADING. MAY OUR HEARTS BREAK OVER OUR SIN BECAUSE IT HARMS OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU AND WITH OTHERS. THANK YOU FOR RESTORING US.



KICK STARTER

DID YOU KNOW?

Being open about our mistakes, worries, and hurts can actually reduce stress and help us process. Whether you confess to God or a trusted friend or write in a journal, the simple act of telling the truth in detail is good for your health—mind, body, and soul.¹³

These optional activities are designed to help your students interact. You'll find a Discussion Activity and a Cultural Connection, which touches on a relevant topic in today's teen culture. Each group is different, so adapt these activities to fit your group's needs. The goal is for students to connect more to the lesson as they connect to the topic and to one another.

1

MISTAKES

SUPPLIES LIST: NONE

Ask the following questions, allowing time for students to share responses:

- **HOW DO WE USUALLY RESPOND WHEN SOMEONE POINTS OUT OUR MISTAKES?**
- **WHAT, IF ANY, VALUE IS THERE IN MAKING MISTAKES?**
- **DO YOU HAVE AN EXAMPLE OF A FUNNY MISTAKE YOU MADE THAT TAUGHT YOU SOMETHING NEW?**

We all make mistakes—even those of us who struggle with perfectionism. The truth is that our mistakes can be really valuable in teaching us important lessons if we'll let them. Today, we'll read about one of David's biggest mistakes, and we'll see that his response to it made all the difference.

2

CULTURAL CONNECTION

Some of us feel the pressure to be perfect. Maybe it's an expectation placed on us, or maybe it's a pressure we put on ourselves. This pressure usually applies to grades, sports, social status, extracurricular activities, and even to our walk with God. Because we're human, we're going to mess up. We're going to fall short and sin (Rom. 3:23). When we do, it can really hurt. How do we move past our failures and mistakes when it hurts so much? We need to know this truth: "For he knows what we are made of, remembering that we are dust" (Ps. 103:14). In other words, the Lord made you and knows your imperfections. God isn't waiting to punish you for your failures. He wants you to confess your sin and turn to Him for help. So often, we run from God out of shame because we have a wrong understanding of who He is. But He loves us so much that He gave His Son for us. And like any good Father, He wants to guide us through our mistakes instead of allowing us to stay stuck in them.

DISCUSSION

MAIN POINT.

Allowing sinful desires to take root leads to devastation.

WE'RE ALL CAPABLE OF SINNING

READ 2 SAMUEL 11:2-5,14-17

WHEN ARE WE MOST VULNERABLE TO TEMPTATION? WHAT COULD DAVID HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY?

David could've looked away; he could've gone inside; he could've talked to someone about his struggles. Instead, he made himself more vulnerable to sinful desires by lingering. **We often position ourselves to fall into temptation. We ignore every warning; we linger in places we should never be. Then, we become vulnerable to our own desires.** We don't take the escape route because we want to follow our desires. We're also more vulnerable to our sinful desires when we're isolated from godly community, when we're not spending time in God's Word, and when we're surrounded by worldly influences.



WHAT DOES DAVID'S DOWNFALL SHOW YOU ABOUT HOW WE FALL?

David didn't suddenly decide to commit adultery and murder; it started in his heart long before it showed up in his actions. None of us are immune to sin's enticement. Truthfully, sin is alluring; if it wasn't, we'd easily walk away from it. **Our downfall usually happens a little at a time though—in small, seemingly insignificant ways.** It begins when we give the enemy an opportunity in our minds and hearts (Eph. 4:27). **One day, we look up and see how far we've strayed from God. But our fall likely started well before, in our hearts and with small compromises.**



WHAT DOES THIS PASSAGE HELP YOU UNDERSTAND ABOUT HOW OUR SIN AFFECTS OTHERS?

When we examine David's decision, we see how many people his sin affected: Bathsheba, Uriah, his future child, Joab, and probably many others who aren't named. David's sin wasn't done in isolation. Uriah lost his life as part of David's manipulative cover-up; Bathsheba lost her husband, and her entire life was uprooted; Joab, the commander of David's armies, acted on David's behalf to set Uriah's death in motion. Our sin isn't done in isolation either. We often think that sin is private. Like David, we attempt to cover it up with our best behavior and, sometimes, with manipulation. Even worse, we often involve others in our sin. **Here's the deal: when we sin, we take people with us. We have the opportunity either to lead others toward sin or away from it! When we believe our sin is personal only, we accept a lie from the enemy and often lean on this idea to justify our actions.**

REPENTANCE IS OUR ONLY RESPONSE TO SIN

READ 2 SAMUEL 12:1-15



WHY CAN WE OFTEN RECOGNIZE OTHER PEOPLE'S SINS BUT NOT OUR OWN?

David easily recognized the rich man's sin in Nathan's story; it even made him angry. **We're often more willing to see and talk about someone else's sin rather than recognizing our own. We're angered by injustice and wrongdoing, unless it's ours.** Thankfully, Jesus surrendered His life so that we could be redeemed from our sin. He sent the Holy Spirit to convict us of our sin so that we can walk closely with Him. We can deal with the reality of our sin knowing Jesus's death and resurrection paid for the ultimate consequences. **Though it's painful, seeing our sin reminds us of our need for a Savior.**



HOW DO YOU TYPICALLY RESPOND WHEN YOU REALIZE YOU'VE SINNED? WHAT DOES DAVID SHOW US ABOUT THE RIGHT RESPONSE?

Many of us would rather not be aware of our sin. Seeing our sin is painful. **So, to deal with the guilt and shame, we sometimes ignore the Holy Spirit's conviction. We run from God (like Adam and Eve); we pretend we're fine; we numb out on our phones; and we throw ourselves into good works.** But David simply responded, "I have sinned against the LORD" (v. 13). He didn't downplay his sin or make excuses. He faced his sin and confessed it to the Lord. **When we hold on to our sin, we experience guilt, shame, loss of joy, and a broken relationship with God (Ps. 32:1-5).** Confession and repentance free us from all of this! It's the only way to experience restoration when we mess up.

HOW DO OTHERS SOMETIMES HELP US SEE OUR SIN? WHY DON'T WE ALWAYS RESPOND LIKE DAVID RESPONDED?

Based on this passage, David was alone on the roof when he made the decision to sin. When we walk through life alone, we're more vulnerable to the enemy's attacks. We're created to walk in community with other believers, and we're called to hold one another accountable. **Even though it stings in the moment when people call out our sin, it's one of the greatest ways they can express their love for us.** Nathan took a risk when he called out king David's sin. When others call out our sin, they're taking a risk too. Instead of being grateful, we're usually embarrassed and insulted. We may even turn away from the relationship. **But God uses other people to show us our sin. When we resist this, we're resisting the Lord.**

WRAP-UP



WHERE ARE YOU SLOWLY GIVING THE ENEMY AN OPPORTUNITY? HOW CAN YOU TURN TOWARD ACCOUNTABILITY?

As much as we'd like to ignore our apathy, we can feel that we don't care as much as we should. When it comes to our walk with Christ, we know when we're beginning to compromise. We may get lazy in spending time in God's Word. We may start watching a show we know isn't good for our mind and heart. We may decide to go on just one date with someone who isn't following Jesus. We may use profanity when we're around certain people. We may think these are one-time decisions, but they often become more. **When we feel ourselves starting to compromise, we can confess this to God. We can be honest about our desire to sin and pray, "God, I want to do this thing that I know doesn't honor you. But I desire to want You instead. Help me to choose You."** We can pray against making impulsive choices. We can talk to a godly mentor. God always gives us a way out when we're presented with the opportunity to sin (1 Cor. 10:13). Ask Him to show you the way; He will.